

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
294 WASHINGTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02108

AREA	FORM NO.
0	491



City Lexington

Address 14 Percy Road

Historic Name (Baird House)

Col.

Owner Charles Thornton House

Present residential

Original residential

DESCRIPTION:

Date 1893-1894

Source Lexington Minute Man, June 16, 1893

Style Shingle Style

Architect Day, contractor

Exterior wall fabric shingle, fieldstone

Outbuildings garage

Major alterations (with dates) _____

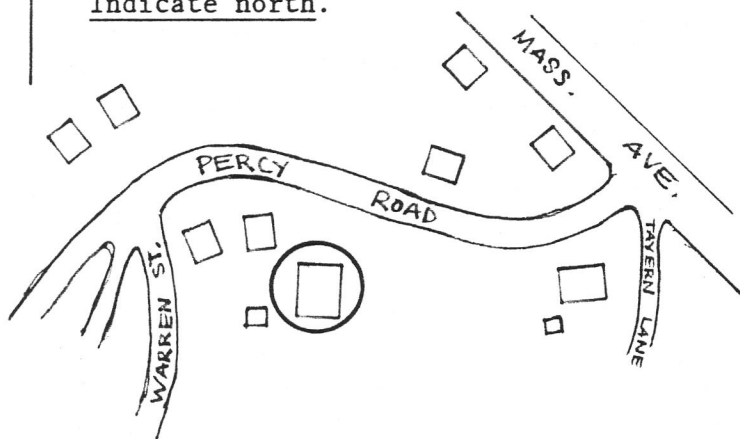
Moved _____ Date _____

Approx. acreage 69075 ft.²

Setting A prominent site on the eastern slope of Munroe Hill; amid houses of similar period.

SKETCH MAP

Show property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection. Indicate north.



Recorded by Anne Grady

Organization Lexington Historical Commission

Date March, 1984

(Staple additional sheets here)

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.)

A house with imposing site, this building combines an oversize gambrel roof which encompasses the second and third stories with a fieldstone first level. The broad overhang of the roof is supported by exposed beams. There are rough-cut granite sills and lintels.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.)

The house was built for Col. Charles C.G. Thornton by Mr. Day, a contractor from Magnolia, Massachusetts. This was a winter residence for Thornton, the newspaper tells us, for in October 1894 his return from summer residence in Magnolia was noted. The newspaper described Thornton's new house as "beautiful, unique, and picturesque" and stated that the location and house were "unusually fine for a country suburban place." Thornton built a cottage for his niece at 16 Percy Road at the same time as his house. Before 1899, Thornton died and his widow moved to the cottage. The main house was bought by William E. Harmon, a real estate broker.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES (name of publication, author, date and publisher)

Lexington Minute Man, June 16, 1893, October 12, 1894, October 26, 1894.

1906 atlas

1894 Directory

1899 Directory

1906 Directory

Personal communication from Mary Baird.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Town
LEXINGTON

Property Address
14 PERCY ROAD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

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491

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Like many residents of Munroe Hill, Col. Charles Thornton first came to Lexington as a summer visitor. The *Lexington Minute-Man* of July 28, 1892 states:

Col. Thornton and family, of Cambridge, who have so many seasons been guests at the Russell House, have rented the residence of A.S. Parsons off Main street, for the winter and taken possession of the same. Col. Thornton is another instance of a mere summer visitor to the town being so attracted by its natural charms that he has been led to finally make his home here permanently, and is even now building a residence for himself on Mt. Vernon. This has been so frequently the case that it has become quite worthy of note.

A description of the house while it was under construction appeared in the *Minute-Man* on October 20, 1893:

Col. Thornton is erecting quite a unique style of house, the low, rambling effect being characteristic of the structure, which will be decidedly picturesque when completed. The place is located off Percy road and has a fine approach, as it nestles to the side of the hill. The driveway is slightly terraced with field stone and the foundation walls of the house, up as far as the hip roofed gables, are of field stone with granite finish. Next to Col. Thornton's house there is a smaller structure being built, similar in style to his own, for the occupancy of his sister.

Col. Thornton died on January 21, 1898. The house was sold to William E. Harmon, a real estate broker. George Childs, a provisions dealer in Boston owned the house from about 1905 into the 1920s. It was subsequently owned by the Baird family from 1948 to 1988.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Lexington Directories, various dates.
Lexington Minute-Man, July 28, 1892; October 20, 1893.
Middlesex County Register of Deeds, Cambridge, Mass.
1898 Atlas.

Supplement prepared by:
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